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IN THE CLAIMS

Please reconsider the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method ~~of accessing data stored in a disk array as a plurality of extents striped across the disks forming the disk array, the method~~ comprising:

receiving a new user access request;

assigning the new user access request to a disk d of said disk array; and

determining when the new user access request will be processed by examining extent size for requested data stored on disk d, wherein if the new user access request will be processed within a predefined period of time, placing the new user access request into a new user queue for disk d; otherwise, assigning the new user access request to another disk of said disk array;

wherein priority is given to subscribers that are currently viewing a program over the new user access request;

wherein requests in the new user queue are ordered by time deadline.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said another disk is up to three disks distant from disk d.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein, if said new user access request cannot be assigned to another disk, waiting a predefined period of time; and assigning the new user access request to disk d.

4. (Currently amended) In a video on demand system comprising a plurality of disks, where video information is striped across the plurality of disks, a method of accessing the video information comprising:

receiving a user access request for a next portion of video information required to present a streaming video sequence to the user;

assigning the user access request to a disk d of the plurality of disks that contains the next portion of video information;

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determining when the user access request will be processed by examining extent size for said video information stored on disk d, wherein if the user access request will be processed within a predefined period of time, placing the user access request into a new user queue for disk d; otherwise, assigning the user access request to another disk of said plurality of disks;

wherein priority is given to users that are currently viewing a program over new user access requests;

wherein requests in the new user queue are ordered by time deadline.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein said another disk is up to three disks distant from disk d.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein, if said user access request cannot be assigned to another disk, waiting a predefined period of time; and assigning the user access request to disk d.

7. (New) A system, comprising:
a plurality of disk drives;
a plurality of queues, including a steady-state subscriber queue for each disk drive to be used for a subscriber that is currently viewing a program, a new-subscriber queue for each disk drive for a subscriber that is beginning to view a program, and an other-request queue for each disk drive; and
a queue selector to determine which of the queues is to receive a next access request based on a priority of the next access request, a highest priority being given to the subscriber that is currently viewing the program.

8. (New) The system of claim 7, wherein a plurality of requests in the queues are ordered by time deadline.

9. (New) A method, comprising:

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assigning an access request to a new user queue, upon determining that with the new user queue selection all of a set of current steady-state queue requests will meet a predefined worst-case deadline, the new-subscriber queue being for subscribers that are beginning to view a program;

assigning the access request to an other-request queue, upon not assigning the access request to the new user queue and determining that with the other-request queue selection all of the set of current steady-state queue requests will meet the predefined worst-case deadline, the other-request queue being for subscribers that are beginning to view a program; and

assigning the access request to a steady-state queue, upon not assigning the access request to either the new user queue or the other-request queue and determining that with the steady-state queue selection all of the set of current steady-state queue will meet the predefined worst-case deadline.

10. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein the access requests in the queues are ordered by time deadline.